Photo credit: NOAA, TPWD, WHOI

Issue 1 August 2012

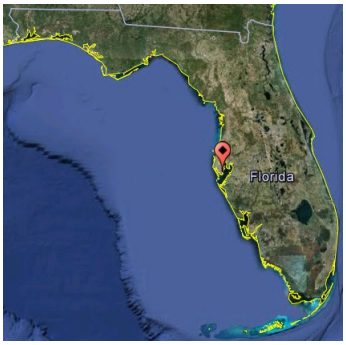
NOAA HAB–OFS Newsletter

Welcome to the first issue of our NOAA HAB-OFS Quarterly Newsletter, created as a way for the NOAA team to share news with you, our bulletin subscribers. We are always happy to hear from you so please send us your topic suggestions, questions, comments, and feedback to hab@noaa.gov.

In this issue:

Join Us: HAB-OFS Florida Bulletin Meeting, August 14th

As part of our ongoing effort to improve communication and coordination with our bulletin subscribers, our HAB-OFS team is excited to be hosting a **Florida Bulletin Meeting** on **Aug. 14th**, in **St. Petersburg, FL**. We hope to see you there, ready for a good discussion. For more information and/or for details on how to participate remotely, please contact hab@noaa.gov.

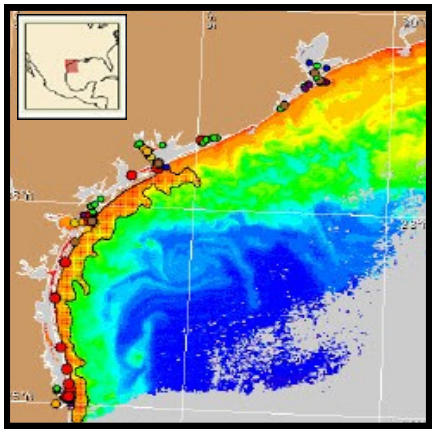


Agenda:

- Bulletin protocols (i.e. priority levels, etc.)
- General bulletin feedback (open forum)
- HAB Public Information Dissemination Development:
  National Weather Service Beach Hazards Statements Pilot Project

We hope to plan a similar meeting in Texas, when possible. Stay tuned.

2012 Bloom Season Begins: Remembering This Time, Last Year



With August 1st officially kicking off the start of bloom season, the CO-OPS team would like to pause and take a look back at the record blooms in both Texas and Florida in 2011. In Texas, last year's *Karenia brevis* bloom was the longest lasting bloom on record (lasting from September to February) and one of the state's largest blooms in terms of geographic size. This was also the first Texas bloom monitored by the CO-OPS team after the experimental forecast system, developed by the National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science (NCCOS), was transferred to routine and reliable operations at CO-OPS. During this time, Texas also endured one of the longest droughts in the state's history. CO-OPS is interested in whether the limited runoff into Texas bays allowed increased saltwater intrusion resulting in the record persistence of *K. brevis*.

Coinciding with the bloom in Texas and winds conducive to upwelling, HAB analysts forecasted formation of a bloom of *K. brevis* in southwest Florida in late September. Sure enough, one was confirmed alongshore Sarasota County, FL later that week. Through daily analysis of water samples and satellite imagery, the CO-OPS team was able to monitor this bloom as it lingered in southwest Florida, periodically causing respiratory distress in coastal areas as it slowly drifted southward until finally dissipating offshore the gulfside of the Florida Keys in mid-May.

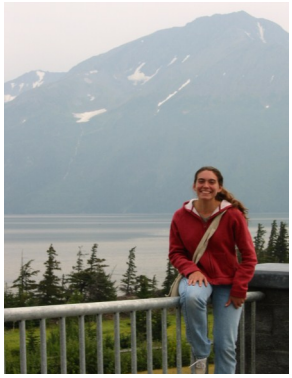
In all, CO-OPS' HAB forecasters spent over 1,000 hours monitoring and forecasting bloom conditions in support of tireless efforts from coastal managers and others engaged in collecting field samples and

mitigating bloom impacts. Preliminary results indicate that over 80% of bloom transport forecasts in Texas and over 85% of bloom transport forecasts in Florida were confirmed accurate. Furthermore, 95% of respiratory impact forecasts in Texas and 76% of intensification forecasts in Florida were confirmed accurate. CO-OPS will continue to work diligently to improve the forecasting system so that we may be at the ready to respond in the Gulf of Mexico as this season gets underway.

Satellite's Silence A Challenge For Lake Erie HAB Forecasts

As a result of the loss of communications with the Envisat satellite on 8 April 2012 (see:https://earth.esa.int/web/guest/missions/esa-operational-eo-missions/envisat), the primary remote sensing product being used to predict blooms of *Microcystis* in Lake Erie has been unavailable this bloom season. Envisat contained the MERIS sensor which had the appropriate bands and spatial resolution (300 m) to monitor cyanobacteria blooms as part of the Experimental Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom bulletin (http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/res/Centers/HABS/lake_erie_hab/lake_erie_hab.html). The Center for Coastal Monitoring and Assessment developed a solution to apply the Moderate Resolution Imaging Spectrometer (MODIS) on NASA's Aqua satellite to substitute for MERIS. While MODIS has some limitations, including lower resolution (1 km pixels vs 300 m on MERIS), it is now being used to support these bulletins.

A Fond Farewell to our CO-OPS HAB Project Coordinator, Katie Fisher…



It is with sadness that we bid a fond farewell to Kathleen (Katie) Fisher after years of faithful service to NOAA and the HAB-OFS. Katie began work on the HAB-OFS as a HAB analyst. Katie's first bulletin was the one that detected the 1.5 year long bloom that began in southwest Florida in the fall of 2004, and in recent years, she served as the leader of the CO-OPS HAB team. Her scientific expertise and leadership will be sorely missed, but we wish her the best in her future endeavors.

…and Welcome to Karen Kavanaugh

Some of you may recognize her name from the Texas and Florida bulletins she has worked on in the past few years. Karen is excited for the variety of learning opportunities she will be presented with as she transitions into her new role as HAB Project Coordinator. She is looking forward to working with all of you and is committed to helping the HAB team carry on the work that Katie helped begin, while continuing to improve the HAB-OFS for many years to come. Feel free to contact her at karen.kavanaugh@noaa.gov anytime with your questions, concerns and/or suggestions.

Many Thanks to our Partners and Data Providers

http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/hab/contributors.html

This newsletter was written and designed by:

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Please send us your feedback and topic suggestions:

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